

## Consumer Product Safety Commission

## § 1610.61

Standard without the information required by this section may result in violation of section 8(b)), of the FFA (15 U.S.C. 1197(b)), which prohibits the furnishing of a false guaranty.

(g) The commission will test fabrics and garments subject to the Standard for compliance with the Standard using the apparatus and procedures set forth in the Standard. The Commission will consider any failing results from compliance testing as evidence that:

(1) The manufacture for sale, importation into the United States, or introduction in commerce of the fabric or garment which yielded failing results was in violation of the Standard and of section 3 of the FFA; and

(2) The person or firm using the alternate test as the basis for a guaranty has furnished a false guaranty, in violation of section 8(b) of the FFA.

(Reporting requirements contained in paragraph (d) were approved by Office of Management and Budget under control number 3041-0024)

[48 FR 21315, May 12, 1983]

### Subpart C—Interpretations and Policies

#### § 1610.61 Clarification of flammability standard for clothing textiles (CS 191-53).

(a) *Background.* (1) The Flammable Fabrics Act, which became effective July 1, 1954 (Pub. L. 83-88, 67 Stat. 111-15), adopted Commercial Standard 191-53 as a mandatory flammability standard to be applied under that act (CS 191-53 had been a voluntary commercial standard, entitled "Commercial Standard 191-53, Flammability of Clothing Textiles," which became effective January 30, 1953).

(2) On August 23, 1954, the Flammable Fabrics Act was amended (68 Stat. 770) to reduce the burning time for flame spread as provided in CS 191-53.

(3) As amended and revised December 14, 1967 by Public Law 90-189 (81 Stat. 568-74), the Flammable Fabrics Act no longer specifically referred to CS 191-53; however, Public Law 90-189 contained a "savings clause" (section 11), which continued the applicability of any standard effective under the act theretofore until superseded or modified. No such change occurred there-

after to CS 191-53 which, accordingly, continues to be a mandatory flammability standard under the act.

(b) *Need for clarification.* It has been brought to the attention of the Consumer Product Safety Commission that lack of clarity in CS 191-53 regarding (1) the positioning of the stop cord, (2) the technique for brushing fabrics with raised-fiber surface, and (3) the criterion for failure of a fabric with a raised-fiber surface results in variations in the way tests are conducted or results are interpreted under the standard, thereby making both compliance with and enforcement of the standard under the Flammable Fabrics Act needlessly contentious.

(c) *Clarifying interpretations.* To alleviate this situation, the Consumer Product Safety Commission adopts the following interpretations on these subjects for CS 191-53:

(1) *Stop cord.* The stop cord shall be three-eighths of an inch above and parallel to the lower surface of the top plate of the specimen holder. This condition can be achieved easily and reproducibly with the use of L-shaped guides and an additional thread guide popularly referred to as a "sky hook." The essential condition, however, is the uniform height of three-eighths of an inch for the stop cord and not the number, placement, or design of the thread guides.

(2) *Brushing.* Brushing of a specimen shall be performed with the specimen mounted in a specimen holder. The purpose of the metal plate or "template" on the carriage of the brushing device is to support the specimen during the brushing operation. Accordingly, such template should be one-eighth of an inch thick.

(3) *Criterion for failure.* In the case of those fabrics having a raised-fiber surface for which a flame spread time of less than 4 +seconds occurs and is the result of surface burning (sometimes referred to as "surface flash"), the additional finding of base fabric ignition or fusion that is required to establish a failure shall have to be associated with the propagating surface flame and not the igniting flame.

(Sec. 1, et seq., 67 Stat. 111-15, as amended, 68 Stat. 770, 81 Stat. 568-74 (15 U.S.C. 1191-1204, note under 1191))

**§ 1610.62 Reasonable and representative testing to assure compliance with the standard for the clothing textiles.**

(a) *Background.* (1) The CPSC administers the Flammable Fabrics Act (FFA), 15 U.S.C. 1191–1204. Under the FFA, among other things, the Commission enforces the Flammability Standard for Clothing Textiles (the “general wearing apparel standard”), 16 CFR Part 1610. That standard establishes requirements for the flammability of clothing and textiles intended to be used for clothing (hereinafter “textiles”).

(2) The general wearing apparel standard applies both to fabrics and finished garments. The standard provides methods of testing the flammability of textiles, and sets forth the requirements that textiles must meet to be classified into one of three classes of flammability (classes 1, 2 and 3). 16 CFR 1610.2. Class 1 textiles, those that exhibit normal flammability, are acceptable for use in clothing. 16 CFR 1610.3(a)(1). Class 2 textiles, applicable only to raised fiber surfaces, are considered to be of intermediate flammability, but may be used in clothing. 16 CFR 1610.3(a)(2). Finally, class 3 textiles, those that exhibit rapid and intense burning, are dangerously flammable and may not be used in clothing. 16 CFR 1610.3(a)(3). The manufacture for sale, offering for sale, importation into the U.S., and introduction or delivery for introduction of Class 3 articles of wearing apparel are among the acts prohibited by section 3(a) of the FFA, 15 U.S.C. 1192(a).

(3) CPSC currently uses retail surveillance, attends appropriate trade shows, follows up on reports of non-compliance and previous violations, and works with U.S. Customs in an effort to find textiles that violate CPSC’s standards. The Commission has a number of enforcement options to address prohibited acts. These include bringing seizure actions in federal district court against violative textiles, seeking an order through an administrative proceeding that a firm cease and desist from selling violative garments, pursuing criminal penalties, or seeking the imposition of civil penalties for “knowing” violations of the FFA. Of

particular relevance to the latter two remedies are whether reasonable and representative tests were performed demonstrating that a textile or garment meets the flammability standards for general wearing apparel. Persons who willfully violate flammability standards are subject to criminal penalties.

(4) Section 8(a) of the FFA, 15 U.S.C. 1197(a), exempts a firm from the imposition of criminal penalties if the firm establishes that a guaranty was received in good faith signed by and containing the name and address of the person who manufactured the guaranteed wearing apparel or textiles or from whom the apparel or textiles were received. A guaranty issued by a person who is not a resident of the United States may not be relied upon as a bar to prosecution. 16 CFR 1608.4. The guaranty must be based on the exempted types of fabrics or on reasonable and representative tests showing that the fabric covered by the guaranty or used in the wearing apparel covered by the guaranty is not so highly flammable as to be dangerous when worn by individuals, *i.e.*, is not a class 3 material.<sup>1</sup> Under 16 CFR 1610.37, a person, to issue a guaranty, should first evaluate the type of fabric to determine if it meets testing exemptions (16 CFR 1610.37(d));<sup>2</sup> if not, the person issuing the guaranty must devise and implement a program of reasonable and representative tests to support the guaranty. The number of tests and frequency of testing is left to the discretion of that person, but at least one test is required.

(5) In determining whether a firm has committed a “knowing” violation of a flammability standard that warrants imposition of a civil penalty, the CPSC

<sup>1</sup>The person proffering a guaranty to the Commission must also not, by further processing, have affected the flammability of the fabric, related material or product covered by the guaranty that was received.

<sup>2</sup>Some textiles never exhibit unusual burning characteristics and need not be tested. 16 CFR 1610.37(d). Such textiles include plain surface fabrics, regardless of fiber content, weighing 2.6 oz. or more per sq. yd., and plain and raised surface fabrics made of acrylic, modacrylic, nylon, olefin, polyester, wool, or any combination of these fibers, regardless of weight.